



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

JUN 11 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DOD PERSONNEL

SUBJECT: Political Activities

All DoD personnel, Service members, and civilian employees alike, swear an oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. Those of us privileged to serve our Nation, in and out of uniform, in the DoD must be the epitome of American values and ethics. Our mission, to protect and defend the Nation, is apolitical.

DoD has a long-standing policy of encouraging its personnel to carry out the obligations of citizenship, which includes permitting certain political activities. However, our policy and tradition also limit active partisan political activities or actions that could appear to imply DoD sponsorship, approval, or endorsement of a political candidate, campaign, or cause. All Service members should familiarize themselves with our policy in DoD Directive 1344.10. While many civilian DoD employees may take an active part in certain political activities, the extent and nature of their participation is limited by the Hatch Act and DoD policy. Regardless of whether civilian employees may engage in political activity, they may never engage in such activity while on-duty or in a Federal building.

I call on leaders at all levels in the Department to reinforce the apolitical nature of military and civilian service and professionalism, while ensuring all personnel remain free to exercise the responsibilities of citizenship as laws and regulations allow.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Patrick M. Shanahan".

Patrick M. Shanahan  
Acting



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MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF MANAGEMENT OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
DEFENSE

SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS  
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE  
CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU  
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
DIRECTOR OF COST ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM  
EVALUATION  
INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION  
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
DEFENSE  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR LEGISLATIVE  
AFFAIRS  
ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PUBLIC  
AFFAIRS  
DIRECTOR OF NET ASSESSMENT  
DIRECTORS OF DEFENSE AGENCIES  
DIRECTORS OF DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Political Activities of Service Members

All DoD personnel, Service members, and civilian employees alike, swear an oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. Those of us privileged to serve our Nation, in and out of uniform, in the DoD must be the epitome of American values and ethics. Our mission and our ethos as military professionals are apolitical.

DoD has a long-standing policy of encouraging military personnel to carry out the obligations of citizenship, which includes permitting certain political activities. However, our policy and tradition also clearly limit active duty members from engaging in partisan political activities or actions that could appear to imply DoD sponsorship, approval, or endorsement of a political candidate, campaign, or cause. Political activity by members of the Armed Forces continues to be governed by DoD Directive 1344.10, which specifically lays out this policy.

I expect you to remind leaders at all levels in the Department to reinforce the apolitical nature of military service and professionalism, while ensuring all Service members remain free to exercise the responsibilities of citizenship as laws and regulations allow.

Patrick M. Shanahan  
Acting